



Author/Lead Officer of Report: Alison Higgins,
Strategic Commissioning Manager, Domestic and
Sexual Abuse
Tel: 07792336148

Report of: *John Macilwraith, Executive Director, People*

Report to: *Co-operative Executive*

Date of Decision: *16th March 2022*

Subject: **Domestic Abuse funding from central government for specialist support for domestic abuse survivors / victims in safe accommodation**

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:-	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
- Affects 2 or more Wards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Which Executive Member Portfolio does this relate to? <i>Health and Social Care</i>		
Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? <i>Overview and Scrutiny Management</i>		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given?	975	
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-		
<p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>		

Purpose of Report:

Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide specialist support to domestic abuse victims / survivors in safe accommodation. A government grant of £1,329,538 has been awarded to assist the Council meeting its new statutory duty.

Approval is sought to agree proposed spending plans with any funds unallocated at this point to be approved via a delegated authority to the Director of Integrated Commissioning (in consultation with the Director of Health and Social Care, the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the Executive Member for Health and Social Care) to meet such statutory obligations.

Recommendations:

The Co-operative Executive is recommended to:

1. Note the Council being awarded a grant of £1,329,538 for 2022/2023 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to meet its new statutory duties under Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as outlined in this report.
2. Approve such spending plans as outlined in this report, in respect of the grant funding being awarded to the Council. Variations to be entered into once the funding has been received.
3. To the extent not covered by existing delegations, delegates authority to the Director of Integrated Commissioning in consultation with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services, the Director of Health and Social Care and the Executive Member for Health and Social Care to carry out such procurements regarding any funds as yet unallocated and award such contracts following a successful procurement process in order to provide specialist support services to domestic abuse victims / survivors in safe accommodation, in line with this report.
4. Where no such authority exists under the Leaders Scheme of Delegation, delegates authority to the Director of Integrated Commissioning in consultation with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services, the Director of Health and Social Care and the Director of Legal and Governance to take such other steps as may be necessary to meet the outcomes and objectives of this report.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

[DA Coop exec report safe accommodation contract extensions 21 22.docx](#)

[Revised proc strat Therapeutic services 24.12.21.docx](#)

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Anna Beeby/Sonya Oates/Andrew Turpin
		Legal: Patrick Chisholm
		Equalities: Ed Sexton
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	EMT member who approved submission:	<i>John Macilwraith</i>
3	Executive Member consulted:	<i>George Lindars Hammond</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Alison Higgins	Job Title: <i>Strategic Commissioning Manager for Domestic and Sexual Abuse</i>
	Date: 16 th March 2022	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This funding relates to the statutory duty which is included in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 that had cross party support and received Royal Assent on the 29 April 2021.
Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a statutory duty for Local Authorities to ensure all victims of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation when they need it.
- 1.2 Tier one Local Authorities (such as Sheffield) have a duty to assess the need for support and prepare strategies to provide specialist support for victims who need to reside in the relevant safe accommodation.
- 1.3 The Council is required to meet the needs of all domestic abuse victims, including those who present from outside of the locality and to provide such support as therapy, advocacy and counselling in safe accommodation, including refuges, to victims of domestic abuse and their children.

1.4 The Government provided £125 million to cover the costs of the new duty in 2021/2022 to ensure there was sufficient provision of support within domestic abuse safe accommodation. They have also committed £125 million for 2022/2023 to councils across England to make sure safe accommodation spaces, such as refuges and shelters, can provide victims with vital support services.

1.5 From the above overall allocation, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has allocated £1,329,538 million for the year 2022-2023 to support the Council with regard to the additional costs to ensure sufficient provision of specialist support within domestic abuse safe accommodation (see Appendix 2 for definitions) and support the Council to meet their statutory duty.

1.6 It is proposed that this funding is drawn down into the Domestic Abuse budget in Strategy and Commissioning and that the spending plans for 2022-2023 as outlined in this report at 1.11 are approved. The overall spending plans for the funding can be found at Appendix 1, some of these already have approval or are seeking separate approval.

1.7 As the funding is related to Domestic Abuse it is proposed that the funding is managed in the Domestic Abuse / Drug and Alcohol Coordination Team (under Head of Commissioning Sam Martin) who will work closely with Housing Independence Service and colleagues in Housing on implementing the proposals.

1.8 Some of the expected allocation is already committed in procurement strategies in relation to:

- 6 months funding of the city’s women’s refuges and dispersed safe accommodation scheme at the current 6 months cost of £317,465
- The recommissioning of the city’s women’s refuges and dispersed safe accommodation scheme, at £675,000 per annum for five years, (therefore a part year cost of £337,500)
- The recommissioning of support for children affected by domestic abuse (£87,190 per annum for up to 5 years combined with other funds from the Domestic Abuse budget and the Children Young People and Families Directorate (CYPF))

1.9 Both of these projects are going to Cooperative Executive or the appropriate Individual Executive Member in March 2022 for approval. The incumbent providers contracts have already been extended via previous Co-operative Executive decisions and Director decisions in the autumn to ensure continuity of service.

1.10 The proposed spending with the rest of the anticipated allocation breaks down as follows:

Service	Organisation	Proposed route/next steps	Dates	2022/2023 Amount
Contract				

Variations				
Support for victims / survivors with complex needs. Drug and alcohol worker	Start Service – Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust	Contract variation already in place	March 2022 – end March 2023 (13 months)	£33,000
Survivor liaison and engagement worker	South Yorkshire Housing Association	Contract for co-production with Changing Futures programme awarded February 2022. Variation to be put in place – agreed by Commercial Services in December. Less than 10% of contract value.	February 2022 – end March 2023	£22,000
Prevention, advice and casework - Housing advice and resettlement	Shelter	Contract variation needed	April 2022 – end March 2023	£64,000
Counselling for refuge clients	Paradigm	Contract variation needed	April 2022 – end March 2023	£12,500
Domestic Abuse community contract - support in dispersed temporary accommodation (Council properties) and for Sanctuary Scheme clients	Independent Domestic Abuse Service	Contract variation needed to in order to provide support to people in properties with Sanctuary Scheme measures	April 2022 – end March 2023	£215,498
Support for young women in safe accommodation -additional units	Young Women’s Housing Project	Contract award includes additional units – funding to be reviewed annually	April 2022 – March 2027	£60,186
Contracts				
Adult counselling	Mind	Remaining 8 months of existing contract This was tendered via the sourcing desk in the	November 2021 – end October	£35,000

		autumn 2021	2022	
Children and Young Person counselling in safe accommodation	Sheffield Futures	Remaining 8 months of existing contract variation – the main contract is the CCG’s	November 2021 – end October 2022	£46,667
Grant Variations				
Counselling for sexual violence in Domestic Abuse context	Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	Grant variation needed		£15,000
			April 2022 – end March 2023	
Benefits and debt advice	Citizens Advice Bureau	Grant variation needed	April 2022 – end March 2023	£71,000

1.11 No variations will be issued until the grant funding has been received by the Council.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

The funding is for specialist support to be provided to victims of domestic abuse residing in safe accommodation. This will contribute to reducing victimisation and keeping people safe in Sheffield.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

There was extensive consultation last year with providers, stakeholders and service users including a public citizenspace consultation. These informed the needs assessment and strategy required by the DLUHC (formerly the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) which was published at the end of last year.¹ The proposals this year are continuations of the projects that were commissioned then with some reductions due to the whole of the refuge / dispersed safe accommodation commission budget coming from the Domestic Abuse Act funding rather than a contribution as was the case last year.

¹ <https://sheffielddact.org.uk/domestic-abuse/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/02/Sheffield-Domestic-Abuse-and-Safe-Accommodation-Strategy-2021-2024.pdf>

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

- 4.1.1 Domestic Abuse is a gendered issue and some of the funding will be used to enhance support offered in our young women's provision, and the majority of the recipients of the other adult provision are anticipated to be female. However the funding will enable increased support to male victims, including GBT+ victims being supported in dispersed accommodation and via our Sanctuary Scheme provision (target hardening for domestic abuse victims to enable them to stay safe in their own homes). The needs assessment and strategy produced last year considers all people with protected characteristics in relation to domestic abuse and is designed to help us ensure that services are accessible to all sections of local communities.
- 4.1.2 The proposal supports the Council's general duties to promote equality as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Sections 149 and 158). Specifically the proposal contributes to obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, which in summary, requires having due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
 - advance equality of opportunity; and
 - foster good relations.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has allocated £1,329,538 for 2022-23. This is as a result of 'new burdens' for local authorities under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act. New burdens 'will arise where new powers/duties/expectations could lead to authorities having to increase spending.'² It is anticipated that new burdens funding relating to the Domestic Abuse Act will be received for 3 years, 2022/23 being the second year. After this point new burdens funding will no longer be received separately but will form part of the main central government allocation to the Council.
- 4.2.2 External Funding review:
- The grant offer letter and terms and conditions for grant funding in 2022-23 has not yet been issued and so cannot be reviewed. Last year's Memorandum of Understanding was subject to the conditions as highlighted below and it is expected that 2022-23's funding offer will be similar. The new offer will be subject to review by External Funding, and if the terms and conditions differ significantly from 2021-22 then further approvals may be required.

21-22 MoU Financial implications:

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-burdens-doctrine-guidance-for-government-departments>

The MoU has been issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and is determined by Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The MoU is not a legally binding document; however, there is an expectation that the obligations within it will be honoured. Key points and obligations to note are highlighted below.

The MoU has already been approved and accepted; approval to spend the grant funding is now being sought.

The grant of £1,325,868 is to enable the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children who are residing in safe accommodation as per the new statutory duty within the Domestic Abuse Bill.

Grant funding only covers revenue expenditure related to the functions of the new statutory duty.

The grant funding period is 01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022. Further funding may be received for 2022-23; however, this has not been confirmed and as such will be subject to a separate approval.

A multi-agency Local Partnership Board is required to be put in place by Tier 1 Local Authorities to carry out functions as specified in the MoU.

A first strategy, based on robust needs assessment, must be finalised by 21st August 2021.

All procurement in Sheffield City Council must comply with its own Procurement Policy, and internal regulations known as 'Contracts Standing Orders' (CSOs).

Contracts Standing Orders requirements will apply in full to the procurement of services, goods or works utilising grants. All grant monies must be treated in the same way as any other Council monies and any requirement to purchase/acquire services, goods or works must go via a competitive process.

The Project Manager will need to read, understand and comply with all of the grant obligations and the [Code of Conduct for Grant Recipients](#).

4.3 **Legal Implications**

- 4.3.1 As set out in the main body of the report the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 created a new statutory duty on local authorities to ensure the needs of victims of domestic abuse in safe accommodation are met in a consistent way. A local authority is required to meet the needs of all domestic abuse victims including those who present from outside of the locality and to provide such support as therapy, advocacy and counselling in safe accommodation, including refuges, to victims of domestic abuse and their children; local authorities are also required to report back to central government.

The grant funding has been accepted by the Council under the terms of a Memorandum

of Understanding (MOU), a non-binding legal agreement. This report seeks to secure authority to utilise that grant funding to best meet the new statutory obligation. Acceptance of the grant funding will help facilitate compliance with the duties imposed by Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It will not have any direct legal implications beyond that, but the implementation of any of the actions set out in the report will be subject to further decision making in accordance with the constitution, and the legal implications will be considered fully at that time

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 None

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 The Council could decide to not accept the funding however this would mean that it would be unlikely to be able to meet the statutory duties in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Sheffield has been allocated £1,329,538 in funding for the year 2022-2023 to meet the new statutory duties introduced by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and outlined within this report. Accepting the funding and allocating as outlined within this report will support the Council to meet those statutory duties.

Appendix 1

Overall Spending Proposal

Service	Organisation	Proposed route/next steps	Dates	2022/2023 Amount
Contract Variations				

Women's refuges		Contract extension to incumbent already approved by Co-operative Executive in autumn last year.	Extension from October 2021- end Sept 2022	£262,500
Safe zones		Contract extension to incumbent already approved by Co-operative Executive in last year.	Extension from April 2022 – end Sept 2022	£54,965
Support for victims / survivors with complex needs. Drug and alcohol worker	Start Service – Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust	Contract variation already in place	March 2022 – end March 2023	£33,000
Survivor liaison and engagement worker	South Yorkshire Housing Association	Contract for co-production with Changing Futures programme awarded February 2022. Variation to be put in place – agreed by Commercial Services in December. Less than 10% of contract value.	February 2022 - end March 2023 (13 months)	£22,000
Prevention, advice and casework - Housing advice and resettlement	Shelter	Contract variation needed	April 2022 – end March 2023	£64,000

Counselling for refuge clients	Paradigm	Contract variation needed	April 2022 – end March 2023	£12,500
Domestic Abuse community contract - support in dispersed temporary accommodation (Council properties) and for Sanctuary Scheme clients	Independent Domestic Abuse Service	Contract variation needed to in order to provide support to people in properties with Sanctuary Scheme measures	April 2022 – end March 2023	£215,498
Support for young women in safe accommodation -additional units	Young Women's Housing Project	Contract award includes additional units – funding to be reviewed annually	April 2022 – March 2027	£60,186
New Contracts				
Safe Accommodation		New contract being commissioned, on agenda for March 16th Co- operative Executive via separate report. Because the re- commission is starting half way through the year the whole year costs are slightly less for 22/23.	October 2022- March 2027	£337,500

Children's support contract		Approved contract extension with existing provider and recommissioning of new contract on forward plan for approval by Individual Executive Member in March 2023.	October 2022 – March 2027	£87,190
Adult counselling	Mind	Remaining 8 months of existing contract This was tendered via the sourcing desk in the autumn 2021	November 2021 – end October 2022	£35,000
Children and Young Person counselling in safe accommodation	Sheffield Futures	Remaining 8 months of existing contract variation – the main contract is the CCG's	November 2021 – end October 2022	£46,667
Grant Variations				
Counselling for sexual violence in Domestic Abuse context	Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	Grant variation needed	April 2022 – end March 2023	£15,000
Benefits and debt advice	Citizens Advice Bureau	Grant variation needed	April 2022 – end March 2023	£71,000
TOTAL				£1,317,006

Appendix 2

Draft Statutory Guidance for Part 4 of Domestic Abuse Bill definitions:

1. Definition of 'Safe accommodation'

- **Refuge accommodation** – accommodation & intensive support tied to the accommodation – to victims and their children.
- **Specialist safe accommodation** – safe accommodation providing specialist support to victims with protected characteristics and / or complex needs e.g., specialist refuges for BAME, LGBTQ, disabled victims
- **Dispersed accommodation 1** Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of DA in self-contained accommodation with the same level of DA support as provided in a refuge or
- **Dispersed accommodation 2.** Safe (as above) but living in semi-independent accommodation who may not require as intense support as the refuge or dispersed 1.
- **Sanctuary schemes** – property with LA or similar scheme providing enhanced physical security measures in the home
- **Move on and/or second stage accommodation** – projects who temporarily accommodate victims and their families who no longer need refuge but would benefit from lower-level DA support before moving to living independently.
- **Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation** – e.g. a safe place with support. Includes access to wrap around and specialist support for victims with complex needs including Mental Health and Substance Misuse – 'whole housing approach'
- **Excludes** – generic homeless hostels and Bed and Breakfast provision– as they are not solely dedicated to providing a safe place for DA victims
 - 'Commissioning authorities will need to ensure that accommodation covered under other Acts, such as temporary accommodation provided under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, are not utilised in fulfilling the requirements of this duty.'

2. Eligible Support to those in safe accommodation is:

- **Overall management of services within relevant accommodation** – including, the management of staff, payroll, financial and day to day management of services and maintaining relationships with the local authority (such functions will often be undertaken by a service manager);
- **Support with the day-to-day running of the service**, for example scheduling times for counselling sessions, group activities (such functions may often be undertaken by administrative or office staff);
- **Advocacy support** – development of personal safety plans, liaison with other services (for example, GPs and social workers, welfare benefit providers);
- **Specialist support for victims - Designed specifically for victims with relevant protected characteristics** (e.g. faith services, translators and interpreters within BAME-led refuges, immigration advice, interpreters for victims identifying as deaf and / or hard of hearing, and dedicated support for LGBTQ+ victims);
- **Specialist support for victims - Designed specifically for victims with unique and / or complex needs** such as, mental health advice and support, drug and alcohol advice and support, including signposting accordingly;
- **Domestic abuse prevention advice** – support to assist victims to recognise the signs of abusive relationships, to help them remain safe (including online), and to prevent re-victimisation;
- **Children's support** – including play therapy and child advocacy;
- **Housing-related support** – providing housing-related advice and support, for example, securing a permanent home, rights to existing accommodation and

- advice on how to live safely and independently;
- **Advice service** – financial and legal support, including accessing benefits, support into work and establishing independent financial arrangements; and,
 - **Counselling and therapy** (including group support) for both adults and children, including emotional support.